Railway engineers joining private companies

†2734. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the engineers employed in Railways and IRCON etc. are quitting their Government jobs and joining private companies where they get higher salary;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of engineers employed in Railways and its PSUs who have taken VRS during last two years alongwith the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government are taking any step to check this tendency; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Electrification of Tirupati-Pakala-Katpadi-Vellore stretch

2735. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Tirupati-Pakala-Katpadi-Vellore, a 115 kilometres electrification project was scheduled to be completed before March, 2007;

(b) if so, what is the estimated cost of the project;

(c) when the project work was Started and' what was the original target set to complete electrification of this stretch;

(d) the length of route kilometres, so far, completed; and

(e) the reasons for not completing the project within the deadline fixed for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Estimated cost of the Tirupati-Pakala-Katpadi-Vellore (115 Route Kilometres (RKM) project is Rs.45.24 crore.

(c) The project work was Started after the sanction of the estimate in January, 2004. The original target of completion was March, 2006.

(d) 64 RKMs have been electrified till March, 2007.

(e) Due to natural calamity and Contractor's failure.

Trains from Rameshwaram to other parts of the country

2736. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to introduce trains from Rameshwaram to different parts of the country;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Introduction of Rameswaram-Bhubaneswar Express (weekly) has been announced in the Railway Budget 2007-2008, Rameswaram-Madurai Passenger in the Railway Budget 2006-2007 and Rameswaram-Haridwar Express in the concluding Speech of the Discussions on the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways) 2007-2008.

(c) Does not arise.

Ticketless travellers

2737. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of surprise checks conducted by the Railways against ticketless travel in the country this year till 1st September, 2007, by high power teams headed by Magistrates, zone-wise;

(b) the number of ticketless passengers apprehended during these raids, during the period, zone-wise; and

(c) the fare and penalty recovered as a result of these operations, and the number of such offenders imprisoned for non-payment of fare and fine, zone-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) The number of surprise checks conducted against ticketless travel by Magistrates, the. number of persons apprehended/prosecuted and the amount recovered by them zone-wise during the year 2007 (January to July, 2007 - latest available) is as under:

Railway Zones	Number of surprise checks conducted by Magistrates	Number of persons apprehended/ prosecuted	Amount of fare and fine recovered (in lakhs)	Number of persons imprisoned for non-payment of fare and fine
1	2	3	4	5
Central	432	13594	24.91	2034
Eastern	2634	10394	16.04	1042
East Central	157	3720	7.06	822
East Coast	197	5013	4.88	72
Northern	581	8464	30.30	2490
North Central	951	12209	43.66	3747